

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An image forming apparatus that includes  
5 service modules for performing system side processes on  
image formation, wherein applications can be added to  
the image forming apparatus separately from the service  
modules, the image forming apparatus comprising:  
an application launch part for referring to  
10 launch selection information indicating at least a  
location that stores one or more applications, and  
launching the one or more applications from the at  
least a location according to the launch selection  
information.

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2. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
20 claim 1, the at least a location is at least one of a  
hard disk device, a recording medium removable from the  
image forming apparatus, a computer connected to the  
image forming apparatus via a network.

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3. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
claim 1, the image forming apparatus further

5 comprising:

a part for displaying a setting screen for  
setting the launch selection information on a display  
part of the image forming apparatus, and storing  
information input from the setting screen as the launch  
10 selection information.

15 4. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
claim 1, wherein the application launch part launches  
the application by referring to information on the  
application.

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5. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
claim 4, wherein the information referred to by the  
25 application launch part is address information of the

application.

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6. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the application launch part determines whether the application is installed at the location according to presence or absence of predetermined  
10 information on the application, and the application launch part launches the application if the application is installed at the location.

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7. The image forming apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the application launch part refers to setting information including information indicating  
20 whether a predetermined application is to be launched, and the application launch part launches the predetermined application if the setting information includes information indicating the predetermined application is to be launched.

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8. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
5 claim 1, wherein the application launch part refers to  
setting information including information indicating  
applications to be launched, and the application launch  
part launches the application indicated in the  
information.

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9. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
15 claim 8, the image forming apparatus further  
comprising:

a part for displaying a setting screen for  
setting the setting information on a display part of  
the image forming apparatus, and storing information  
20 input from the setting screen as the setting  
information.

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10. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
claim 1, the image forming apparatus further comprising  
a virtual application service that operates as a client  
process for the services modules and operates as a  
5 server process for the applications,

wherein the virtual application service  
includes the application launch part.

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11. The image forming apparatus as claimed in  
claim 2, wherein the image forming apparatus receives  
an application from the computer connected to the image  
forming apparatus via a network by using a http  
15 protocol or a ftp protocol, and the application launch  
part launches the received application.

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12. A computer program for causing an image  
forming apparatus to launch an application, wherein the  
image forming apparatus includes service modules for  
25 performing system side processes on image formation,

and applications can be added to the image forming apparatus separately from the service modules, the computer program comprising:

application launch program code means for  
5 referring to launch selection information indicating at least a location that stores one or more applications, and launching the one or more applications from the at least a location according to the launch selection information.

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13. The computer program as claimed in claim  
15 12, the at least a location is at least one of a hard disk device, a recording medium removable from the image forming apparatus, a computer connected to the image forming apparatus via a network.

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14. The computer program as claimed in claim  
12, the computer program further comprising:  
25 program code means for displaying a setting

screen for setting the launch selection information on  
a display part of the image forming apparatus, and  
storing information input from the setting screen as  
the launch selection information.

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15. The computer program as claimed in claim  
10 12, wherein the application launch program code means  
launches the application by referring to information on  
the application.

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16. The computer program as claimed in claim  
15, wherein the information referred to by the  
application launch program code means is address  
20 information of the application.

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17. The computer program as claimed in claim

12, wherein the application launch program code means  
determines whether the application is installed at the  
location according to presence or absence of  
predetermined information on the application, and the  
5 application launch part launches the application if the  
application is installed at the location.

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18. The computer program as claimed in claim  
12, wherein the application launch program code means  
refers to setting information including information  
indicating whether a predetermined application is to be  
15 launched, and the application launch program code means  
launches the predetermined application if the setting  
information includes information indicating the  
predetermined application is to be launched.

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19. The computer program as claimed in claim  
12, wherein the application launch program code means  
25 refers to setting information including information



indicating applications to be launched, and the application launch program code means launches the application indicated in the information.

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20. The computer program as claimed in claim 19, the computer program further comprising:

10           program code means for displaying a setting screen for setting the setting information on a display part of the image forming apparatus, and storing information input from the setting screen as the setting information.

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21. The computer program as claimed in claim 20 13, wherein the application launch program code means receives an application from the computer connected to the image forming apparatus via a network by using a http protocol or a ftp protocol, and launches the received application.

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22. A computer readable medium storing  
5 program code for causing an image forming apparatus to  
launch an application, wherein the image forming  
apparatus includes service modules for performing  
system side processes on image formation, and  
applications can be added to the image forming  
10 apparatus separately from the service modules, the  
computer readable medium comprising:

application launch program code means for  
referring to launch selection information indicating at  
least a location that stores one or more applications,  
15 and launching the one or more applications from the at  
least a location according to the launch selection  
information.

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